

A Trip to South America.

In the fall of 1869 I was very anxious of going to sea. So I left off work which was at Mr. Fuchs' Upholstering shop in Cambridgeport & went to Boston to a shipping agents office to get a chance on board a merchantman for a short voyage such as to go to the West Indies. But as I was unable to be at the shipping office all of my time I lost several chances. For as the Captain of a vessel going to the office for sailors wishes them to go immediately so as to sign ship articles. As I had lost several chances in this way 2 weeks of my time had expired for naught, It made me more determined to go. So one day while at the office I met an agent of a whalership in there talking to some of the sailors for to ship aboard his craft to go whaling. At last he came to me & seeing that I was a green hand (or boy) he were a persuading me to go, telling me what nice times they had & all like that. As I then did not care much about how or where I went I made agreements for to go. At night

I went home to my boarding house pleased with the
idea of a chance to go. I then discussed the question with
a friend of mine that roomed with me (Mr Miller by
name) to see if he would not like to go with me. Finally
he answered me in the affirmative. Yes The next morning
a Wednesday we both went into Boston at the office
on Commercial^{go} for to see the agent. We then gave
him our names & place of residence onto his shipping
papers when he gave us a glass of beer for friendship's
sake & told us to beat the Providence Depot the
next morning at 9 o'clock to take the train for New
Bedford where the Bark Milton laid. We both then
came home feeling glad once more of a chance of going.
We went around during the evening to see our friends
before going which took us till late in the evening.
When the next morning came we got up early &
had our breakfast ~~which we were~~^{and was} at talking over
the matter in regard of going. After we had
eaten Mr Miller spoke of one more friend he
would like to see & as we had ample time
enough he would like to go & see him promising
to be back in $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour. The time came &

passed but he made no return. At last 1 P.M.
came but no return. Then I went into Boston for to
see the agent again & I told him what had
transpired which he excused me & told me to come
in again on Saturday for to meet him at the Depot
for to take the 4 P.M. train. The day came & proved to
~~raining~~ be a full stormy & I did not care to go. So I postponed
it until the next Monday for to take the 7.30 A.M.
train. It was a delightfull morning & after shake-
ing hands once more around I bid them good bye &
started on my way for the ship at New Bedford.
arriving there at 10.4. A. M. After finding the ship &
then the ship office I found then that I was to late
for all hands had signed ship articles on a Saturday
night. To give it up I would not, so I went around
the wharfs to find another chance to go a whaling
& I succeeded in finding another chance on a
Bark by the name of Edward Everett which was
a laying in the Dry Dock for repairs being
satisfied of a chance I came home for to wait 1
week more for her to be Repaired. I arrived
home that night at 5 P.M. which surprised the

folks very much to see me come home again without
a whale. They told me that Waller was scared of the
smell of whale oil therefore he had kept back &
had not been seen since, after waiting for that
week to go (it seemed longer or two) I started off for
New Bedford for the second time by bidding them good
bye. They told me that I would be back again with
another whale before a great while, but I told them
that it would not be quite so soon again for I was
going to stay. This time in going to New Bedford
I had to stay another week for to paint her, I was
so anxious to come home this time so I made up
my mind to stop at the Harringers home on Chapell St.
During the week I signed ship articles & found that
I was to have the 195 lay, that is every 19th gallon or
barrel I have the value of one of them, the higher the
barrel the better the lay. Well I got acquainted with
a lot of them & we went around together to amuse
ourselves & had a good time generally. The home was
especially for mariners & it had a chapel along ^{side} of it.
Mr & Mrs Tigh who had charge of the home were good
Christian people. She was real motherly woman & did

what she could do make the home pleasant for us. We often went down into the kitchen when she was at work & have a talk with her, which made it seem much like home, there were many poor sailors there that had no home but the sea. As for me I had a good home but thought of trying of what a home on the sea might be, It did not take more than a week before I began to realize what my future home might be, It was any thing but pleasant which I will tell you about soon. Two days before we sailed, we had the order for to go to the shipping office for to get our outfitts for a 3½ years cruise, the old shark (for that is what we nicknamed him) took us up stairs for to pick out his chest, mattress, blankets, & clothes for the voyage, My outfit all told amounted to \$ 95.25^{cts} with 6 lbs tobacco & a bundle of matches thrown in, Some had more, some less just as he thought he required. We called these ship owners sharks because they charge more than an ordinary price for their slop clother, It did not make any matter with me, for we were not to pay for them till the end of our cruise & as I thought of leaving the vessel

6 some future time I intended that they would have to whistle for there pay & I guess they have been whistling ever since. The clothe were sold to the natives for fruit & money, The tobacco were stolen from me like many others, by the sailors who in playing bluff (with cards) take ones & anothers tobacco to play with after loosing there own. The morning we started away which was Nov 1st 1869 Mr & Mrs Tigh shook hands with all of our ships crew who were ashopping there & bid us good cheer, then we went on our way down down to the Bark for to sail on wide Atlantic & Pacific. All the way down to the wharf I could not help but to think & to compare the home I once had to the home that was laid out before me, & of the kind friends I were to leave perhaps never to see again, & of the good times I had had. such were I meditating to myself all the way down hardly speaking to any one, it seemed most impossible but such it were to be, it was to late, I had signed ship articles, I could not back out, to go I must, Well as we were all aboard with our Chests, we cast of our cable ropes which held us to the pier, then a tug boat pulled us out into the

stream we then set sail, such a jumping around
for the ropes it was a regular circus, the Mate would
sing out for to hoist such & such a sail & no one
would seem to know what rope to take hold of to
pull on & there we were all mixed up, there were 4 out
of 16 sailors that knew the ropes. The Mate were a
hollowing at us while the Captain would stand of
by himself & laugh at us. At this time I was wishing
myself on shore again for of such a flurry I thought
of what it might be in a heavy gale. After a while
we made out to get our square sails, stay sails, & gibbs
hoisted, the Captain then called of the roll call & he
found us all there at this same time the tug boat
let go our bough lines & left us to our destiny. We
had sailed out about 25 miles when a pilot
boat came across us & asked if we were all right
we answered in the affirmative (yes) when he left
us. Once more we were left alone. Just about
this time the 1st & 2nd Mates chose watches that is
the sailors stands in a group & the Mate picks
out one man & the 2nd Mate choose one, so on till
they they are all chosen, 8 men 2 boats steerers & 2
mates in a watch. The Captain has a watch
of his own & that is from 12 to 1 o'clock at night

⁸ when there is a severe gale. I was chosen in the
Starboard watch in the Starboard boat. Our
regular duty was to stand most head on the fore
degallant top. 2 hours for to look out for whalers
2 hours at the helm to steer & 2 hours on the fore
bitts for a lookout at night time, at other times
we had to scrape & slash the mast down work on
rope making seines thumb lines & spin twine with
a spinning jinnie. In a storm all hands had to
take hold & manage the ship. We had 4 hours on duty
to work then 4 hours relief from the other watch that
we might, it made it come so that we would have
4 hours rest in a day & 8 hours with one interval at night
but the next day we had the reverse 8 hours in the
day & 4 at night. Our diet was a poor man's fare in
this shape, In the morning we had hot coffee & hard
tack (or scouse) For dinner we had Bean soup twice
a week (the beans were so far apart that you would have to
swim in for them) with a piece of salt beef or pork.

We eat bread twice a week with salt meat, Corn bread
once, Rice once, & Fish & potatoes once For supper
we had tea & slops & hard tack no milk or sugar
in tea or coffee only a little molasses to sweeten it
with. It may well be imagine that our fareing

was far from being A N° 1, As for being sea sick
was something I was not troubled with, the first
piece of meat they gave us came nigh making all hands sick
& they thought that would not do so they chucke it
over board & gave us what they had better, For water
we were stunted we had a dipper that held two swallows
& that was all you could have at at time, as for salt
water the ocean was full of it help yoselfs, but it was
not very agreeable to wash in for it would smart your
eyes, so I tried a little Yankee trick in this style.

In the morning when got up I would go to the pump
for a drink & instead of swallowing it I would go
forehead out of sight with it in my mouth & slop
it in my hands & wash my face, that was the
neatest way I could procure a toilet mornings,
To wash our clothes we would tie them to a line
& tow them over ~~the~~ over the sides of the vessel
for to soak then we washed them the best we
could, sometimes we could catch a little rain
water then we were all right, then only, for the
starch & ironing we ^{thought} could not be to nice
so we let that go, Such as this we call a Sailor's
happy life, he is always at home with his mate.
However, I was not exactly a sailor yet so I did
not feel quite at home but would give all my

old books to be there, The third night we were
out we had a little taste of a storm at sea, we had
it to our hearts content. We were in the Gulf
stream where it is always equally, at first the wind
blew high, then all hands aloft & take in sail, I
felt like playing sick than to go aloft for it was
the first attempt up aloft & I looked up many
times before I started to go, but it was no use you
had to go, The further south we sailed the higher
the seas got to be till they got to be mountain high
& as we rode in the trough of the seas it seemed
that the next sea were to cover you all over but
it would not for the vessel would ride up & down
first in a hollow then on top off a wave when you
would see a great abyss below, the water would break
over the side of the vessel & wet you through & through
our vessel tumbled round so that we thought
she would strain herself & spring a leak which
would prove fatal to us all for we could not
pump ship for it was all we could do to
stand on our feet by holding on some prominent
rope the sea washed our bucketts & some barrells
over board that we had on deck & we dare not let
go our hold to save them for fear of going ourselves.
As we had 4 boats swang up on davies along

the ships sides with oars, harpoons, tub line, bread & compass already to lower in the water at a moments warning in pursuit of whales, one sea broke up against a boat & drove it up into kindling wood, we lost every thing, another sea broke off our flying gibboom it was a hanging in the water by 3 ropes until the next morning when we had a chance to take it in on deck, One man at the lookout were taken from his post clear aft & came nigh going overboard but for some one who were close by to save him, it took 2 men at the helm to keep straight, Such was a storm at which we often had though not always so fierce, It always gives us a wetting through which makes us change our clothes for a dry pair, At times we would have to change 3 different times & when that was wet which was our last we would in such stormy ^{weather} turn in our bunks with them on, & in turning out at the next watch on deck we would be all off a cold sweat, if it were fresh water instead of salt it would be certain death to us. One other night when it was my watch on deck we had a storm approaching us & the Captain sings out man the ship, then the mate sang out, stand by the stays, & as we stood along in a

in a line for to go aloft if the wind should increase, a heavy sea came aboard on the weather side where we were standing & took me as well as 3 others across the deck they were fortunate for to have something in there reach to cling hold off but for me it took me across the deck twice finally I struck my head against a hatch way which stunned me so that I had to go below till the next watch on deck I was all right again. After passing the Gulf stream where we were during these storms we met quite pleasant & mild weather for we were nighing close on to the Equator where the weather is hot as fire & the sun hardly ever cease to shine, Neptune comes aboard then & visits all & each ones has to look out for himself for he will be in Davie Jones locker. Here on the Equator line we began to see different kinds of birds such as the large albatrosses penguin & the little lot of a night whale bird which skims over the water far away from any land. Then we see all kinds of fish such as the shark, flying fish, black fish, cow fish, sun fish, & ovipoises which we used to catch a few, of the latter kind for to eat which tastes like the meat of beef. In taking off its hide (which we call blubber) which is an inch thick & boiling it down we used

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to get a gallon of oil from them, It used to
be exciting work to get these fellas, In the
first place a boat-steerer would get out over
the boughs of the ship with a harpoon attached
to a pole & a long rope hitched to the pole & as
the porpoises would come up in schools along
side of the ships boughs we would throw the
harpoon into them, then 4 or 5 of the men on deck
would haul on the rope till we got them aboard.
many times we would loose them for as we would
get them half way up there flesh would tear away
from our hold & drop back into the water again,
Then the rest of the school would give chase
for them & suck there blood, The oil we got
was used for the cabin but could not be wasted
so much as to be allowed in the forecastle for
the sailors, We could turn in in the dark but we
did not all the same, we used to steal the coopers
pitch pine & spit it in strips & burn it for to turn
in by, As we had all these birds & fishes to look
at I felt more at home & contented besides we
had by this time got well acquainted with each other
had learnt the ropes, & to do our duty that which
was necessary on board ship, We had a fiddle, an

¹⁴ accordion, tambourine, harmonica, & the bones, for to furnish us with a little Music to make us lively, Well as we were fast sailing to the southward we were approaching closer on to Cape Horn which we greatly feared on account of the prevalent hail storms that prevails there. At last we reach there, cold weather we begin to feel & the storms comes, but before the storms comes which we anticipate to see we are closely reefed sail, & head sailors all in ~~in~~ ^{snug} little canvas we dared to carry for the wind would blow it away from us, We had this weather for a whole months time when we had sailed in the southern Ocean which was quite a treat to get out of such harsh weather all this while we were around the horn we had all our boats in on deck one we had turn upside down & as we would come out on deck from our watch below we would make for the boat to get underneath it (for it was extended from the top of the coopers bench to another one) so as to keep out from the storm All this time we had to turn in our bunks with wet close in for it was necessary for to turn in, so as to turn out in a moments warning, & what clothes we had were all wet & no hopes of ever drying them, As we had sailed out of the howling wilderness,

we soon got into fair weather by getting in the ¹⁵
Southern so as to beat up around on the west coast.
The grand Pacific, we then were all over one
Cape Horn fever which is worse than to be sea sick
for you feel like dying all the while. Soon we began to
see still larger fish than at first which they
call Whales, we had seen a few small specimen
of whales before such as the hump back & the fin
back Whales but now we saw the monsters, which
are called sperm the right the sulphur bottoms
& the grey backs. We had often seen whales from
mas't head & would lower boats for them to give
chase for them but nary a whale did we get our boats
were most to noisy in the water for it splash all
the time & when they here a noise they would scoot
under water out of site. We liked the fun in
chasing after them for it made little excitement
for us, we would lay back ^{our} oars & pull many miles
away out off site of the ship we always had a little
compass in the boat so as to tell us in what di-
rection the ship laid in. One time we were in site
of 4 sperm Whales & we lowered 4 boats in pursuit
for them which was one apiece for each boat & if
a boat got hold of one then they would signal by

¹⁶ by a flag which would bring all the others, so our starboard boat which is the Captains boat got close along side of a whale when the boatsteerer who is a colored Portagee get forward in the bough of the boat & fires his harpoon at the whales which strikes the whales head, he should have thrown it far to strike in its neck where its cords are & the harpoon would held fast. Well the whale did not stop long enough for to receive a second blow but left the others boats seeing our good luck left there chase & came to our rescue only to save this man from drowning for as he throwed his harpoon he lost his balane in standing & fell over board, the boatmen caught hold of the hair of his head & got him in the boat, The Captain in his mad ness swore at the men in saving him & called him a jonah & said he out to be in the whales belly.

As we all got back aboard the Bark again we were making comments on the poor fellow, he was hissed from all quarters Officers & Sailors, he was put amongst the sailors & the best sailor took his place, When we had been on the Pacific side for a week we had got into more extensive whaling grounds & while there we met a lot of whale vessels some were about to go home & others like ourselves had just got there, we would lower a boat with a crew & go aboard a ship & another

boat to another ship, & a third boat to a third ship
& they the same, so in our ship we would have one
boats crew & the other 3 boats crew, to belong to the ship
would be from the other ships, if a wind would come
up we would work just the same as tough it was
~~aboard our own vessel~~. This is what we call gaming.
ladies in going visiting calls it gabbing, we would
stay from 4 hours to 24 hours at a time this is the
way we exchange reading give books & papers away for
others, also exchange letters from home & besides we get
the news from one place & another which is interesting to
us.

Feb 10th 1870 we had sailed up to Tacora
island there we furled sails & anchored there
then we lowered the Captains boat & crew into
the water & they pulled for the shore. Right
after the Captains boat followed the 1st mates
boat & crew, we pull together for a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile when
we reach the island, then we get out & pull
our boat up on shore & went where we were a
mind to as a little freedom for 2 hours, my stars how
our hearts leaped with joy to get a chance to get
on solid ground after walking the ships decks for
3 months, we would run races, jump, & turn head over
heels, barefoot, and acting like we never saw land

before. There were a beautifull beach all around the island & an abundance off shells such that I had never seen before. The trees shrubs & flowers with their handsome foliage were such that I had not seen in good old Massachusetts, the grass & clover with there blossoms were the same & it put me right at home to look at them, there were a little cascade from among the high rocks running down into the ocean which were refreshing to look at, also to drink. there were a lot of wild sea birds that the Captain & Mate were shooting off to take to the vessel. There were so much to look at that the 2 hours seemed like 10 minutes, & we had to scamper down to the boats again & pull off back to the ship again. Then they pulled us up on deck again, then we lowered the 2nd & 3rd Mates & their crew down in there boats & they took the same vacation that we had for 2 hours, when they came back they brought a lot of birds as we did. they were so plenty that they could afford to let some of them come down into the forecastle that we sailors might have a taste of them. & we were aboard our noble Bark once more we hoisted up anchor & set sail & we were off again. You may well imagine that we had enough to

talk about for one while. though it was but 3rd
weeks time when we anchor again. it was Feb 27.
this time we reach Saint Carlos island which we
reached Saturday afternoon. next day being Sunday
the Captain let us have 1/2 day liberty for to go ashore, so
they lowered our two boats crew as they did before
into the water & we paddled for the shore again. this time
we found the island to be inhabited by the natives.
which numbered about 2,00 people they all worked
for an englishman which they call him governor for he
hires the whole of them to work for him. he has cattle,
cows, horses, sheep, pigs, hens, & dogs which runs at large
& he takes them in his little vessel to Valparaiso Chile
& sells them (Chile is famous for dogs they have from 2 to 6 most
every family) Our Captain bought a whole beef which we
had all the time till it was gone & it did not take a
great while for it to go. As we went ashore the
natives looked at us with amazement wondering who
we might be for they dont very often see foreigners
soon we got a little acquainted with them then we
began to have a good time, they make a real hol-
ler day of a Sunday & drink Pisco, that is Wine. &
they us to drink & we would go some where else & get
milk to drink & the two would not set well & so

would make us sick. The natives here are Spaniards & they are very coarse featured looking with long black hair hanging down in two braids. Their huts are built of shrubs or bushes principally with clay pasted on the outside & every time it rains hard they have to patch it up here & there. Their furniture consists of boxes for tables & joints of the back bone of a whale which are as large as the water buckets for stools. They get only 20cts a day or what they call dose rials so you see they can't afford much furniture. It was a curiosity to me to compare the difference in the living of the S. Americans Spaniards & the N. Americans Yankees. They in not knowing what better is, are highly contended